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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

RELEASE ON RECEIPT

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Subject: "FORTNIGHTLY FOOD-SHOPPING TIPS." Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Consumers' Counsel, U. S. D. A.

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Another fortnight has rolled around since the last tips for food-shoppers came from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Today more notes on prices and supplies of seasonal foods are here to help you in planning menus and buying food for the family.

The first item of news today concerns the price of butter. The wholesale price of butter usually reaches its seasonal high point in December. November was the month the least milk and butter was produced; December was the month the price hit top. Now, more butter is coming on the market, and the price is going down. The predictions are that for the rest of the winter the production of milk and butter will be relatively high. But since less butter is in storage, the total amount for the country will be about the same as last year. Butter prices will probably be going down all during the first half of the year. But butter will probably sell for more than last year because more people will be able to buy it. You know how this matter of price and demand goes. Usually the more the demand for a food, the more the prices go up. During recent months butter prices went up more than they usually do. December prices of butter were the highest since 1937, not because butter was scarce, but because more people had more money and could afford to buy more butter.

From these tips on butter let's turn to news of pork. Your butcher will probably not have so much pork to sell you from now on for some months, and the

price of pork will be higher. The estimates are that the country will have considerably less pork from now on. And prices naturally will go up. So you can expect to pay more for the pork you buy the rest of the winter than you paid last winter when the price of pork was relatively low.

Now here's a note on beef. The wide difference in price between top quality beef, and the lower grades still continues. So for the next six months you can expect to pay considerably more for a pound of beef graded "Choice" or "Prime" than for a pound of beef rating only the grade of "Commercial" or "Utility".

Here are tips on poultry and eggs. Less poultry and fewer eggs for the rest of the winter than we had last winter---that's what the forecasters say. You remember the hatch last spring was small, and the effect naturally is our present smaller supplies of both poultry and eggs. Better prepare to pay more for both poultry and eggs in 1941 than you paid in 1940. Ordinarily, the price of eggs goes down from December to April as more eggs come on the market. But egg prices have a way of jumping up and down with the weather in January and February. A spell of very cold weather means fewer eggs going to market. And fewer eggs going to market means a temporary rise in prices.

Now here's a little news about rice. More rice for '41! This country now has more rice on hand than it ever had. The supply of California rice is close to record, and the supply of rice in the South is the largest on record. Rice is usually an inexpensive food. It should be especially cheap this year. By the way, you are welcome to a free leaflet on cooking rice. All you have to do to get this leaflet with a lot of fine rice recipes in it is to send a postcard to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., asking for Leaflet 112 called "Cooking American Varieties of Rice." Once more--Leaflet No. 112 called "Cooking American Varieties of Rice." As long as the free supply holds out, that leaflet is yours for the asking.

But let's get back to our shopping tips. Let's hear the news about potatoes. The news continues to be: More white potatoes this winter than last and fewer sweet potatoes. The price of potatoes has passed its low point and now is on the way up. But when the white potato crop is large, as it was this fall, the price doesn't go up much during the winter. You can expect to see sweetpotatoes go up considerably in price, as they usually do this time of year, if the crop has been small.

Everybody who enjoys baked beans on Saturday night, and bean soup, and all the other dried bean dishes will be glad to hear that more dried beans will be on the market for the rest of the winter than ever before. In other words, supplies of dried beans probably will be the largest on record. All the figures aren't in yet on different varieties of dried beans. But from the figures so far it looks as if there will be lots of pinto, and Great Northern beans, as well as some California varieties.

Here's the last tip for today. It's about pears. You probably won't see as many fresh pears on the market the rest of the winter and spring as we had last year. The canners took more pears this year than they took a year ago. And a great many pears also have gone for relief distribution. So the canners and the people on relief together have offset the larger crop of pears this year and the cut-down in the export of pears.

That's all the shopping tips for today. More in a fortnight.

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